

Pesticide

info

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PESTICIDES



California Department of Pesticide Regulation

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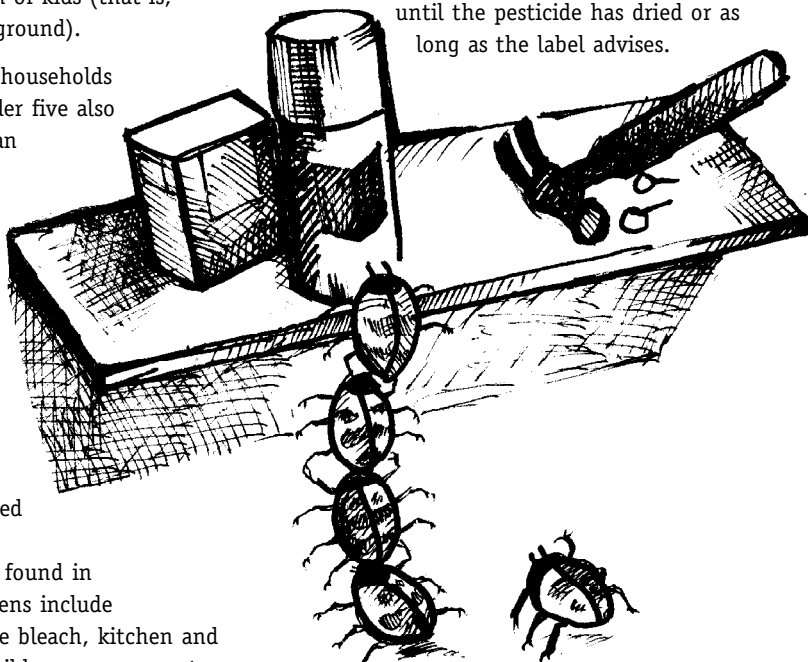
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Don't play around with children and pesticides

Although pesticides can be useful around your home and garden, they can also be dangerous if used carelessly or if not stored properly and out of the reach of children. When the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency surveyed American households, they found that: Almost half of all homes with children under five had at least one pesticide stored in an unlocked cabinet within the reach of kids (that is, within four feet of the ground).

- About 75 percent of households without children under five also stored pesticides in an unlocked cabinet within a child's reach. More than one in 10 pesticide poisonings happen in homes other than the child's home.
- Bathrooms and kitchens were the areas most likely to have improperly stored pesticides. Common household pesticides found in bathrooms and kitchens include roach sprays; chlorine bleach, kitchen and bath disinfectants; mildew removers; rat poison; insect and wasp sprays, repellents, and baits; and flea and tick shampoos and dips for pets. Other household pesticides include swimming pool chemicals and weed killers.

- Cal/EPA's Department of Pesticide Regulation offers these tips for safe pesticide use: Read the label before you use any product, and follow the directions to the letter, including all precautions and restrictions.
- Before applying pesticides (indoors or out), remove children and their toys as well as pets from the area. Keep them away until the pesticide has dried or as long as the label advises.



- NEVER transfer pesticides to other containers that children may associate with food or drink. Every year, children are poisoned by pesticides some unthinking adult placed in an empty soda bottle.

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- Always use household products in child-resistant packaging. And use the packaging properly by closing the container tightly after you are done.
- When applying insect repellents to children, read all directions first; do not apply over cuts, wounds or irritated skin; do not apply to eyes, mouth, hands, or directly on the face. Use just enough to cover exposed skin or clothing, but do not use under clothing.
- Put away pesticides immediately after use. If you are using a pesticide or other household chemical and are interrupted (perhaps by a phone call), stop to properly close the container and remove it from a child's reach.
- Always store pesticides where children can't reach them or even see them. Garden pesticides should be locked in a cabinet or shed. Put kitchen and bathroom cleaners and chlorine bleach behind locked doors as well. You can buy child-proof safety latches at your local hardware store to install on cabinets.
- Teach children to how to recognize and stay away from all poisonous materials, whether garden pesticides, household cleaners, or prescription drugs.
- Make sure grandparents, babysitters and other people your child may visit know how to make their homes safe.

- Don't stockpile pesticides – buy only enough pesticide to carry you through the use season.
- Better yet, look for solutions to your pest problems that call for less or no pesticide use.

Your county University Cooperative Extension office is a good source of information. Ask about "integrated pest management." With IPM, you work with nature to create an environment where it is hard for pests to survive. Techniques include cultural practices (such as mulching to prevent weeds), encouraging natural enemies ("good bugs"), and judicious use of pesticides (choosing a chemical that best targets the problem and poses the least risk to people and the environment).

If you have any questions about how to use, store, or dispose of pesticides, call your county agricultural commissioner, who enforces pesticide laws and regulations locally. The commissioner's phone number is with other county government numbers in the white pages of your phone book. Also check DPR's Web site at www.cdpr.ca.gov for more tips and information.